

THE HERMIT'S TALE.

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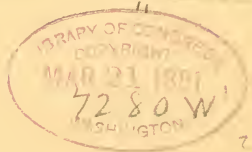
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

THE
HERMIT'S TALE
AND
OTHER POEMS

BY
GALEIGH



NEW YORK
JOHN B. ALDEN, PUBLISHER
1891

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PREFACE.

IN presenting to the public this little book of poems, the author feels that singular trepidation and uneasiness, common to the amateur on his first appearance before an audience.

The works of an author are regarded by himself, as others regard their children. They are the concentration of all his powers of pathos, wit, love and science ; a combination of the beautiful and instructive, together with all the erudition of which he is master. Truly they are his children ; springing, Minerva like, from the richest sources of his mind.

Less capable than others, of seeing the defects of these children of his im-

agination, with whom his heart-strings are entwined ; whose composition is the very essence of his soul—he regards them as perfect, where a less partial critic would only find faults innumerable.

History and common sense prove conclusively to my mind, there is no *best* but what some day, soon or late, must give place to a *better*. In the world of letters, Shakspeare, I believe, is the single exception to this rule.

I am neither so vain nor egotistical, as to think for a moment that this crude outgrowth of my fancy, may ever dare to rank higher among the brilliant stars in the poetical sky, than a mere candle compared to the dazzling brilliancy of the electric light. And yet the insignificant candle may not be too rashly spurned ; its dim and glimmering rays, have been the bright beacons to guide man to the accomplishment of some of his greatest masterpieces—literary, mechanical, etc.

Let this volume be the candle, and if from its tiny flame, warmth to the heart, or light to the mind of the reader be imparted, no greater boon will be asked by—

THE AUTHOR.

INTRODUCTION.

THE CHASE.

COUNT RUPERT, with a gallant train,
Arose at morn to chase the deer;
And loud the bugles blew amain,
The noble companie to cheer.

The prancing steeds, with trappings
 gay,
Impatient of restraining rein,
Seemed waiting for the, Hark! Away!
Nor had they long to wait in vain.

With merry song, in joyous mood,
They pass the time as on they ride,
Until they come unto the wood
Wherein the timid game might hide.

And then uncoupled was each hound,—
The horns were blown with might and
 main;
From hill and cliff the notes rebound,
And Echo sends them back again.

At length, from out a tangled brake,
The noble chase is seen to start,
And madly for the river make,
While high beats every huntsman's
heart.

Man, horse and hound, then swift pursued
The flying buck, that closely pressed,
Tried turns and windings to elude
The baying pack that gave no rest.

He came unto the river's brink,
Nor pausing for a moment there,
He straightway plunged, and did not
shrink
That broad and raging flood to dare.

On, on, the fierce pursuers come—
The foremost hounds close in his wake ;
But some of them are drowned, and
some
Will not e'en to the water take.

Of all that gay and gallant train,
That started out at morn so soon,
But six or seven now remain,
The chase not o'er ; the time, but noon.

These stood upon the river's verge,
The torrent filled them with dismay;
And then they saw count Rupert urge
His coal-black steed into the spray.

And as they stood upon the shore
And watched him, as he sunk and rose,
Full nobly then the charger bore
His rider,—swift the water flows,

For now he's in the current's strength,
Now near, and nearer to the land,
Until the tide doth shoal at length,
And now, upon the bank they stand.

Among the rest, was none who dared
That angry, sullen flood to brave,
For though count Rupert had been
spared,
Each felt assured 'twould prove *his*
grave.

A single dog the trail pursued,
A single horseman cheered him on;
Through thorny woods, and brambles
rude,
They sped till evening near was gone.

Now nearer draws the close pursuit,
The tired stag almost is spent,
One moment more—the noble brute,
The hound hath seized,—the shaft is
sent!

Count Rupert, weary from the chase,
Doth now beside his victim stand ;
A desolate and dreary place—
Alone, and in an unknown land.

The sky, meantime, had grown o'er-cast,
And distant thunders muttered low ;
The evening shadows gathered fast,
The rising wind began to blow.

The knight mounts on his horse again,
And seeks the way he late had traced,
Until he reached a barren plain,
With naught in sight but desert waste.

And then the truth burst on his mind,
That he had surely missed his way ;
His course he could no longer find,
At least, until the bright'ning day.

He gave the bridle to his steed
To take whatever way he chose,

And some blind instinct seemed to lead
Him, where, the knight nor cares nor
knows.

On through a mountain pass they go,
Until they find a narrow path ;
But fiercer still the wind doth blow,
In presage of the tempest's wrath.

The lightnings flash from cloud to cloud,
Which by its glitter are revealed ;
And heaven's vaults reëchoed loud
The thunder's voice, as high it pealed !

The rain in torrents seemed to pour,
And drenched the knight all through and
through ;
His body chilled unto the core,
As wilder still the tempest grew.

But yon, what seems a glimmering star,
Shines dimly through the Stygian night ;
But whether it be near or far,
He may not yet determine quite.

He turns his course where gleams that ray,
And soon unto his gladdened eye
Appeared a firm and open way,
And then what seemed a hovel nigh.

His heart is lightened at the sight,
His charger now he onward urged,
Till at the door he doth alight,
From whence that guiding beam emerged.

He loudly at the door doth knock,
And asks to be admitted soon;
The inmate doth the door unlock,
As willingly he grants his boon.

A small apartment, bare and rude,
Count Rupert finds himself within;
It seemed to match the solitude,
But no fastidious eye could win.

All, everything, was scant and plain,
No ornament adorned the place;
No emblem of a fancy vain,
Could anywhere be found a trace.

A simple cross hung on the wall,
And on the cross the churchman's beads;
Cot, chair, and table, that was all
That seemed sufficient for his needs.

But who was he, apart from men,
Far from the world's gay multitude,
Who sought his home in that wild glen
Surrounded but by solitude?

A hermit he appeared to be,
Whose life was given unto God.—
Have patience yet, and you shall see
How he had bowed beneath the rod.

From out a shelf within the wall,
He brought the knight both food and
 drink,
And bade him welcome to his all,
Then in reflection seemed to sink.

The knight ate heartily and long,
And felt his strength restored again,
Then joyous would have sung a song,
But courtesy bade him refrain.

The hermit seemed in deepest thought,
A strange light came into his eyes ;
Absorbed, he took no note of aught,
Nor tried abstraction to disguise.

And still as louder shrieked the gale,
As o'er the mountain crest it swept—
A moment cowering he did quail,
And then unto his feet he leaped !

His face, by strong convulsions worked,
Portrayed the picture of despair,

As though within his soul there lurked
A horror more than man might bear.

Sudden, the tempest ceased to roar,
The wind was stilled, the storm was
 hushed
About them, as it onward bore,
Carrying destruction where it rushed.

Then spoke the hermit, "Marvel not,
Sir knight, that I was sore dismayed ;
This night has things I thought forgot,
Brought back to mind,—myself be-
 trayed."

"To be confessor, 'tis not mine,"
Count Rupert cried, "But by the rood !
First, father, take this glass of wine,
Then tell your tale—'twill do you good."

With trembling hand he took the glass,
And placed it to his pallid lips, [pass
Then from his brow there seemed to
The shadows dark, while slow he sips.

It seemed he wished to speak, but still
The silence deep remained unbroke ;
At last, as though against his will,
He raised his head, and thus he spoke,—

“ Sir knight, didst mark as here you
rode,
High perched upon the mountain’s
crest—
(A fitting place for the abode
Of outcast souls that find no rest—)

Didst mark I say, in that lone spot,
That emblem of our faith—a cross,
Of iron strong that ne’er shall rot,
Protected by wild vines and moss?

And didst thou mark how bent the
arms,
The body twisted, torn and riven?
That cross has stood the fiercest storms,
And with the fires of heaven striven!

If speak it could, a tale ’twould tell
Would shake thy reason on its throne;
A story dark as midnight hell,
And it I know, and I alone.

’Tis on such fearful nights as this,
That cross holds converse with my soul;
I hear its spirit burn and hiss,—
I see the molten river roll,

Wherein, that spirit evermore
Must suffer torture of the damned,
Nor tread the cool, refreshing shore,
By od'rous breezes ever fanned.

Release from pain is close at hand,
Yet distant as eternity;
And chained to life, that iron band
Denies the luxury—to die.

Forbear this dreadful thing to learn;
Seek not this horror to unveil;
'Twill make thy inmost spirit burn,—
Thy living heart to shrink and quail!"

Broke forth the knight, "Nay, father,
 nay,
There's naught can daunt count Rupert's
 heart;
Tell what you will, say what you may,
My courage lives, till life depart!

So, father, do not hesitate
Thy marv'rous tale to tell,—but still,
If you refuse it to relate,
Why—" Said th' recluse, "My son, I
 will.

List thou, and mark well what I say,
With all thy courage be thou fenced ;
Shouldst fail, the penalty thou'lt pay."
This said, his tale he thus commenced.

THE HERMIT'S TALE.

PART I.

Full two score years have passed away,
Since high upon yon mountain gray,
A noble castle once did rise,
Where now, but ruins greet the eyes.
O, once it rose in splendor grand !
With battlements and barbican,
Watchtower, moat with drawbridge
spread,
O'er which full oft, with martial tread,
A many a gallant knight had crossed—
Their names now e'en to story lost.

To Roderick* of the "Bloody Hand,"
The terror of the whole broad land,
That ancient castle then had passed,
And he was of his race the last.
Rough and untamed, from childhood's
days
Battle and forage had been his plays ;

* Pronounce Rode-rick

And as he older grew, he worse
Became, until his name a curse
Drew down from peasant and from peer,
Throughout the country far and near.

His vassals scattered o'er the plain,
His mercy had implored in vain ;
While all his peers, disdained to lend
To such a fiend, the name of "friend."

At length within his rocky nest,
High perched upon the mountain crest,
He shut himself, the drawbridge raised,
And quiet staid for many days.
Tired of rapine, and of war,
Within himself he seemed to draw,
New inspiration there to find,
That might his soul the firmer bind
To hell, and to that demon dread,
To whom he owed that hand so red.

But o'er him sudden came a change,
And other climes he wished to range,
And his own blood he sought to shed
In expiation for the dead :
Resolved to fight in Palestine,
Until his soul was purged and clean.

But new perplexities arose
To keep him from the course he chose ;

The means required are not at hand
To take him to that distant land;
So loud he stormed and long he swore,
But grew no richer than before.
At last, reluctant, he agrees
His vassals from their fealties
He will release, and no more tax,
If they will raise the means he lacks.
His terms all joyfully accept,
And true and well their word was kept;
They set to work without delay,
And paid the sum in merry May.
Soon was he ready to depart,
And any day might see him start;
At length, when close of spring had
 neared,
Lord and retainers disappeared.

Great was the joy in hut and village
That often had bewailed his pillage;
Once more their life they can enjoy,
And Freedom's bliss, without alloy!
Throughout the land walks smiling
 Peace,
The clash of arms once more doth
 cease;
The maids no longer fear to roam
Amid the delis away from home.

No fleshless bones hung to a tree,
Are seen again. The land is free!

Short-lived, alas, that joyous time,
He seeks again his native clime;
More fierce and wicked now is he,
More cruel still—if that might be—
Than when he left for holy lands,
To wrest Christ's tomb from pagan hands.
Trampled are the vineyards fair,
And by the burning houses' glare,
Murder and Rapine, hand in hand,
Are seen portrayed by that fell band.
Full humble is the peasant's prayer,
That he in mercy will forbear;
But messengers for clemency,
He hangs upon the nearest tree.
Their prayers, they find, are all in vain,
And treated but with wild disdain.

As e'en the veriest worm doth feel,
When it is crushed beneath the heel,—
As we from ancient proverb learn,—
The worm, aye, e'en the worm will turn.
Loud o'er the land now Vengeance
cries,
The echoing vault of heaven replies;
Revenge! for murdered old and young;

Vengeance! for the maid undone,—
For our homes in ashes lying,
Vengeance, for the dead and dying!

Rung o'er the land Red War's alarms,
And loud the cry, To arms! To arms!
Now close in battle's stern array,
They make them ready for the fray,
And march against that fortress' strength,
With hopes to right their wrongs at
length.

Full soon the fortalice they reach,
And fiercely strive to make a breach
Into the thick and solid wall,
Around the baron's feudal hall.
But strongly was it manned and well,
By those who fought like fiends of hell.
Yet nobly did the yeomen fight,
'Till closed the sable robes of Night,
Upon our mother Earth's fair breast,
Where each one laid him down to rest.

From day to day, the fight renewed,
Still left the castle unsubdued;
The weary soldiers 'gan despair
To drag the lion from his lair,
And though they cannot forward go,
To backward turn would add but woe;

Torture, and death, would be the fate
That each and all would then await.

Full oft where boldness naught avails,
'Tis strategy that turns the scales.
'Twas thus it happed : One stormy
 night,
That followed uneventful fight,
When lightning flash and thunder burst,
Proclaimed the tempest at its worst ;
And heaven's windows, broke in twain,
Poured down on earth its floods of rain,
While wild and loud, strong Boreas
 wailed,—
The castle's outer wall was scaled.
A thrust,—all's still ; and none may tell
How died the lonely sentinel.
One moment since, with measured
 tread
He marched,—and now he's with the
 dead.

The banquet hall presents a sight
In contrast to the dismal night,
As seated round the wassail board,
The sparkling wine so oft they poured
Into the goblets large and high,
And full as oft then drained them dry.

All there seemed mirth and merriment,
With every one on pleasure bent;
And when some reveler raised a song,
Loud rang the hall their praise and long."

"Sir knight," the hermit turned and
said,

"I fain that song to you would sing,
Although full many a year has fled,
Still in my head the numbers ring."

"Then, father, let me hear thy song,
I would learn all concerns thy tale;
And whether it be short or long,
To list to all I will not fail."

"My voice is cracked and feeble now,
Though once, it loud and boldly rung
E'en clear as doth thy own I trow."
He drained his glass, and thus he
sung:—

WINE SONG.

Hail, Bacchus! god of rosy wine,
We gladly worship at thy shrine,
For care doth never with thee stay,
But at thy presence flies away;
And, O, it gives us joy divine,
To steep our souls in rosy wine!

Nothing dost thou know of sorrow,—
Nothing carest for the morrow ;
Always merry, gay and free,
Nothing ever troubles thee ! [mind,
 When painful thoughts possess our
 We drown them all in rosy wine.

Spring or summer, winter, fall,—
To thee are one both each and all,
For they all pass merrily
To the god of mirth and glee ;
 So here we pledge us truly thine,
 And steep our souls in rosy wine.

When thy brimming cup we sip,
Slow we take it from our lip :—
Ah, would that we could sip forever,
And from thy cup be parted never,
 For, O, it gives us joy divine,
 To steep our souls in rosy wine !

“ He sang that song and sang it well,
But, ah, it was his funeral knell ;
As through his lips the last word
 passed,

Above the tempest rose a blast
So shrill and loud, the clarion notes
O'er hill and glen resounds and floats ;
And e'er the latest sound is lost,

The foe into the hall has burst!
Dire the panic, short the strife,
Where man to man they fight for life.
The baron taken unaware,
Had no time given to prepare,
But from the nearest soldier's hand,
He quickly snatched a gleaming brand,
And fierce and wild he havoc played
Amid their ranks. But undismayed,
The yeomen fight for liberty ;
Revenge ! Revenge ! is still the cry.

But few of Roderick's men remain,
Some of them fled, but most are slain ;
And though the blood from many a
wound,
Doth pour upon the slippery ground,
Still Roderick fights, he will not yield
While he a trenchant blade can wield :
He seems a demon in the fight,
A giant's power is in his might,—
But ah, that blow hath made him reel,
And his heart's blood hath dyed the
steel!

The fray is o'er, the vict'ry won,
But war's dread work not yet is done ;
They seized the baron's lifeless form,

While yet the blood was ebbing warm,
And placed him in his armor black,
Scarred o'er with many a battle hack,
Nor casque and floating plume forget,
Which on his head they mocking set;
And there, within his banquet hall,
Where late the chief and soldiers all
Were floating on wine's Lethean stream,
They hang him from the highest beam,
As though to show contempt and hate,
For him who awed them all but late.

Then quickly was the torch applied
To hall and tower, that long defied
To yield their strength to crumbling age;
But yield they must, unto the rage
Of fierce and uncontroll'd fire,
Whose flames were rising fast and higher.
Far o'er the land, that ruddy light
Illumed the gloomy face of night,
As bright it shone for many a mile,
O'er level plain and mountain wild,
And where it on the water gleams,
Reflection multiplies its beams.
At last, o'er all the castle spread,
Its ashes mingle with the dead,
And naught but mouldering ruins now,
Remain upon the mountain brow.

But still dark swinging in mid-air,
Shown by the dying ember's glare,
Suspended by an iron chain,
That clanks and groans, as if in pain,
When by the wind's tempestuous force
Is blown about that fearful corse;—
The yeomen see before their eyes,
What fills their hearts with dread surprise.

On every side the solid wall
That rose about the banquet hall .
Had fallen down, except the place
That hangman's beam had served to
brace!

With fear they gazed most anxiously
Upon that fatal gallows tree,
Which seemed an omen to them all,
That some dire evil would befall.
But no one present, dared go near
And move from sight their cause of fear;
So there they left the corse to swing,
The chain to clank, the armor ring.

The years rolled on, and Peace once
more

Took dwelling in the cottage door.
Joy and prosperity now reign,
They mourn no more the trampled grain;

No more their flaming homes give light
To show their miseries to sight.
The old give up to calm content,
The young, to mirth and merriment.

Upon that ancient castle's site,
There seemed to rest a curse and blight;
No ivy clambered o'er the wall
That still remained of tower and hall;
No wild flower bloomed about the court,
But baleful vapors from the moat
Rose in the air,—their odors foul,
In harmony with bat and owl,
That there had built their nests to brood
Their dark day-time in solitude.

Still hung that fearful thing in air;—
The peasant's quickly muttered prayer,
As after dark he passed perchance
Near by, and threw a backward glance,
And crossed himself,—was due I wot,
To fear of that unhallowed spot.
And then perhaps he'd hasten home,
Where o'er the ale-pot's creamy foam,
He'd tell some tale of goblin grim,
That followed in pursuit of him.

Sudden, that armor disappears
From where it hung for ten long years,

And in the lead of desp'rate men,
That coat of mail is seen again !
Ah, woe were they, when fresh torment
Broke in on peace and sweet content.
Again with fire and with sword,
New foes unknown, the people goad ;
With bated breath the word is passed,
" Dark Roderick has returned at last !
And to the fiend with full control,
For lease of life, has given his soul."
Some said, that Satan thus had shaped,
That in fierce Roderick's armor draped,
He would harass, and do his worst,
For which the baron would be cursed.
But one thing's sure, for all their evil,
They blamed Roderick,—and not the
 devil."

PART II.

The hermit paused, then on the brink
Of speaking out, his lips he closed ;
From further speech he seemed to shrink,
As though his utterance were froze.

A hectic flush spread o'er his face,
His head sank low as if with shame ;
He sudden rose, and one might trace
Where passions left their mark of flame.

Abrupt he spoke ; " Sir knight, behold
Before you one, whom fickle fate
Left to his will, free, uncontrolled,
Which brought him to his present state.

Of noble lineage I came,
Possessing wealth and pedigree,
But nothing could my wildness tame,
I longed a lawless life and free.

I left my father's honored hall,
For forests wild, and heather bare ;
I left friends and companions, all,
To join brigands and robbers there.

We often fled from justice stern,
But left destruction in our path ;
E'en as the flame doth fiercer burn,
Blown by the whirlwind's awful wrath !

At length the outraged law arose
In all its majesty and might,
And all mankind became our foes,
With purpose fixed, their wrongs to
right.

At last, surrounded, starved and worn,
Outnumbered far,—we could but die ;
One resource left, one hope forlorn,
And this, we were resolved to try :

We boldly charged upon the foe,
Determined to escape or fall,
And when the stormy rush was o'er,
But twelve remained, myself and all.

Still raised against us every hand—
No place of rest where'er we turned,

We 'scaped unto this foreign land,
And justice' power disdainful spurned.

Unknown, we mingled with the crowd,
And learned each superstitious tale
Of bloody Roderick, fierce and proud,
'Gainst whom they never ceased to rail.

Our band, assembled at *that* place,
(In council met, to form some plan
That now might mend our altered case),
Staid till the eve to midnight ran.

All was arranged, our plans were laid,
Each thing that might advantage lend
Was there discussed, and wisely weighed,
To prove its fitness for our end.

One question only, now remained,—
To choose a leader for our band;
Some three or four arose and claimed
Pre-eminence for that command;

And as discussion louder grew,
While sharp and higher rose their words,
We each and all our pistols drew,
And laid our hands upon our swords.

Just then, unto our gaze appeared
A knight in armor dressed complete,
And as he to our circle neared,
His presence all with horror greet;

No sound betrayed him as he stepped,
His visor closed, his features hid,
Made him appear like those who slept
Beneath the narrow coffin's lid.

In stature, he was broad and tall,
His armor black as midnight gloom;
And when he spoke, his voice did fall
Like sounds emerging from the tomb.

In hollow tones his accents rang,
As o'er us all he seemed to tower,
And dashed his sword with mighty clang
Upon the ground, while all did cower,—

“Why stand ye here,”—’twas thus he
spoke,

“With arms against each other drawn;
Why bend ye to dissension's yoke,
And make yourselves the laugh of scorn?

There lies my sword, let him who can,
Strong wield it as a man of might;

And he whose arm doth suit the brand,
Shall be your leader in the fight."

We tried, but all unequal proved
For such a herculêan task ;
The knight looked on as though un-
moved,
Until the test of him we ask.

He seized and waved on high the blade,
Amazement shone in every eye,
As o'er his head it circles made
Of flaming light, while swift did fly .

From off the steel the sparkles bright,
As on it quick and changing sped,—
Flashed like a meteor through the night,
Then paled like corpse-light o'er the dead.

With loud acclaim we hailed him chief,
Unanimous was every voice ;
Both wise, and strong beyond belief,
He proved full worthy of our choice.

Always the foremost in the fight,
No power could his strength oppose ;
He seemed a demon in his might,
And terror spread among our foes.

No one e'er saw him eat or drink,
None ever saw his visor raised ;
So strange this was, we could but think,
'Twas not on mortal man we gazed !

Silent he was, and never spoke,
Save when occasion did demand
The self-imposed restraint be broke,
And no one dared his will withstand.

His manner, somber, cold and stern,
Changed to a fiendish glee in fight ;
To see the peasant's cottage burn,
Filled all his soul with fierce delight ;

To hear the dying's parting groan,
The stricken widow's frenzied wail ;
The murdered son, the parents mourn,
And list the ruined maiden's tale,—

Ne'er failed to rouse his horrid mirth,
And diabolic laughter loud ;
He seemed like Satan loosed on earth,
With all the arch fiend's power endowed.

Unequal force, had equal proved
Now long upon the battle field,
At once, the people it behooved
To conquer,—for they could not yield.

They called religion to their cause,
To aid them in the dubious strife;
The church arrayed to join the wars
With which the land had long been rife.

Now for th' attempt the priests prepare,
To exorcise the fiend of hell,
With bell and book, with song and prayer,
They armed themselves, with purpose fell.

It chanced upon a summer's eve,
Both forces met within a glade;
Their spells the churchmen 'gan to weave,
Each peasant bared his gleaming blade,

And with a shout the foemen close,
Resolved to conquer or to die;
The wood re-echoed to the blows,
But soon we were compelled to fly.

Our leader turned the last, to meet
The swords that now retreat oppose;
The churchmen's exorcisms greet
His ears, as loud and wild they rose.

As by enchantment, at that sound
His nerveless hand relaxed the steel,
And down it fell upon the ground,
As powerless he 'gan to reel.

The yeomen seize on him, and bind
His hands and arms, resistless now,
And as they cords about him twined,
Most fearful tortures they did vow.

They take him to the market square,
An ignominious death to die ;
To hang him there in public, where
His bones might swing 'twixt earth and
sky.

“ Remove his armor,” now they cry,
“ Nor hang him in his knightly gear.”
The knight deigned not to make reply,
Nor showed he any signs of fear.

Their shouts loud and exultant rang,
As rudely on the knight they seize ;
Then down *it* fell with thunderous clang,
Revealing what their blood doth freeze !

No living man, before their eyes,
No thing of flesh and blood they see ;
The empty armor, broken lies
Upon the ground,—*but where is he?*

He disappeared, but none can tell
Who, what he was, or where he went ;

They thought 'twas Roderick, 'scaped
from hell,
Or by his master Satan sent.

The days passed by, their courage came
Back to their frightened hearts once
more,
They cast the mail into the flame,
And melt it into gleaming ore ;

This fashioned they into a cross,
The same that stands on yonder hill,
Its wounded arms bound o'er with moss,
And at its feet a tinkling rill.

The church's prayers first gained the
steel,
Unto the church it yet belongs ;
Before it doth the pilgrim kneel,
Reminded of the peasant's wrongs.

But little more remains to tell,
Yet *that* lies nearest to my heart ;
My mind doth ever on it dwell,
The memory may ne'er depart.

Each day yon weary hill I climb,
Each day I kneel 'neath yonder cross ;

Yet not for me, hath dulling time
The power to soothe my pain and loss.

'Twill ease my soul, to thus confess
The pain I've borne, the wrongs I've
done;
O would to God I could redress
Those wrongs! but oh, redress there's
none.

Didst ever love?—Nay, answer not,
Thou *couldst* not love as I have loved;
I loved the purest maid I wot,
Most beautiful, that ever moved.—

It chanced one day, in idle mood,
I from my comrades stole away,
And hied me to the shady wood,
And on a mossy hillock lay;

The song of birds, the hum of bees,
The laughing brook as on it swept,
The sighing wind among the trees,
All lulled,—and slumber o'er me crept.

How long I slept, I cannot say,
A piercing scream smote on my ear,
I instant sprung from where I lay,
And heard again that cry of fear.

I turned ; clasped in the rude embrace
Of one, most desp'rate of our band,
I thought I saw an angel's face
Gaze tow'rds me, and an outstretched
hand.

The villain loosed his hold and turned—
The maiden fell like one that's dead ;
My very soul with fury burned—
Our bared swords spoke all to be said.

I smote at him with all my strength
And struck his blade—mine snapped in
twain ;
Unequal strife, his twice the length
Of mine, which still I did retain ;

Bleeding and faint from many a wound,
I still fought on, though almost sped ;
God gave me strength to bring him down
With one last blow upon his head.

I fell, and then I knew no more ;—

* * * * *

When I awoke, to my surprise
I saw a maiden bending o'er
Me, tear-drops glist'ning in her eyes.

She was the same whom I had saved,
And she in turn had saved me too ;
Her image on my heart engraved
As then it was, e'en now is new.

I would have spoke, she gently placed
One lily hand upon my lips,
In token that I should not waste
My breath,—I kissed her finger tips.

The blushes deepened on her cheeks,
And then she sweetly told me how
Near unto death I'd lain for weeks,
With fevered wound and burning brow ;

How glad she was to be my nurse,—
How hope and fear alternate swayed
As I grew better, or grew worse,
And how for my recovery prayed.

Ah, still the music of her voice
Comes ringing in the wake of Time ;
Its merry tones seem to rejoice
Like to the church bells' merry chime.

No need to tell her that I loved,
Nor asked she of my former life ;

We knew but this, our souls were moved
To be as one, as man and wife.

'Twas when long summer days were
 past,
And rainbow autumn closely neared,
As herald to the Boreal blast
That in the distance dim appeared,—

'Twas when the peasant did rejoice
To see the land with plenty rife,
'Twas then the maiden of my choice,
Became my true and loving wife.

How swift those halcyon days sped by!
Months flew as quickly as a thought,
Until at length, another tie
Unto our happy home was brought.

Our Stella was indeed a star,—”
“What!” said the knight, “why that is
 strange,—

Excuse me, father, I but mar
Your tale, your story disarrange.”

“I said she was a star indeed,
To guide me to a higher life,

Her pure bright face, could only lead
One to avoid all thoughts of strife.

'Twas thus that I withdrew from those,
Whose evil deeds had been my own ;
Withdrew from curses, wine and blows,
Th' associates I long had known.

As day by day, I longer staid
Away from those dark cruel men,
It was reported that I strayed
In search of herbs amid the glen.

Sometimes for days, for weeks I staid,
O, happy days of joy and bliss !
When I returned, my herbs displayed,
Helped the illusion to assist.

The day before that last dread fight,
When God that demon crushed to earth,
The sun arose a baleful light,
Omening that dire day's dark birth.

That day alas, at early morn,
Loud ringing over hill and dale,
I heard the sound of huntsman's horn
Borne to me on the favoring gale ;

A stag flew by me like the wind,—
The horn rung nearer and more near,
'Till soon the hunters, close behind,
To my foreboding sight appear.

O, God! it was that awful shape,
A score of followers at his back;
For me I knew was no escape,
From him, the knight in armor black.

They pause, and look at me amazed,—
My wife stood by me with our child;
Their looks grew cruel as they gazed;
The chief said naught, but grimly
 smiled.

Then: "Is it thus thou wouldst betray
Thy chief, thy comrades, and thy
 cause?
Is't thus thou'dst throw thy life away,—
Rememberest not the bandit's laws?"

His hollow voice rung like a knell,
The funeral of departed joys:
I shudder even now to tell
This tale, my mind it near destroys.

“Some seize and bind that traitor
there.”—

I struggled, but 'twas all in vain ;
Resistance was but useless, where
'Gainst numbers, one might nothing
gain.

My gentle wife about me clung,
And held our babe in close embrace ;
He rudely seized, and harshly flung
Her aside—she fell upon her face.

With more than human strength en-
dowed,
I burst my bonds, and I was free ;
Quick, o'er my prostrate love I bowed,
And raised her head upon my knee.

O, God, her life was fleeting fast—
The pallor deepened on her cheeks,
Where Death's dark wings their shad-
ows cast,
While hovering o'er the prey he seeks.

My burning lips to hers I pressed,
And sought to bring her back to life ;

One fervent prayer to heaven addressed—

O give me back my love, my wife !

And heaven heard my earnest prayer ;
She slowly oped her dimming eyes
And gazed in mine, then murmuring,
“ There,”

She raised her hand towards the skies.

She spoke no more, but softly sighed,
Still gazing at me, sweetly smiled ;
Thus in my arms my darling died
As calmly as a sleeping child.

O, who may know the pain I felt,
O, who my torture then may know ;
As by my sainted dead I knelt,
O'erflowing was my cup of woe.

Not long I knelt, rude hands were laid
Upon me, then with fury burned
My soul, I wrenched from one his blade
And slew him, then his body spurned.

Her murderer next I saw, and sprung
To slay him, in my fury blind,

Just as my sword aloft I swung,
A villain stabbed me from behind.

They left me lying there for dead.—

* * * * *

Dead to the world I was, for crazed,
I knew naught 'till two years had sped,
And when they told me was amazed.

They told me all that I have told,
My darling's death, her murderer's fate,
But there they stopped ; my blood ran
cold,
Why did they pause, why hesitate ?

Tell me, I cried, with anguish wild,
Where is my Stella,—quickly give
Unto the father's arms the child,
Thou darest not say she doth not live.

They silent stood, nor answer gave,
But looked at me with pitying eyes ;
O speak ! I cried, where is her grave ?
Speak, tell me where my darling lies.

An old man then the silence broke ;—
Silvered his hair and bent his form,

His voice still trembled as he spoke,
As shaken by emotion's storm,—

“We know not that your child is dead,
We know but this; she disappeared
That dreadful day,”—the old man said.
All was not lost as I had feared.

What need to tell how day by day,
I searched in vain long weary years :
What need to tell how I did pray
Upon my knees to God, in tears.

Alas, alas, 'twas all in vain,
I could not find the slightest trace
To lead me on and end my pain,
By gazing on my darling's face.

Full many a year has fled since then,
And all these years I've lived alone,
Afar removed from haunts of men,
Unsought by all, and seeking none.

My child, my child, my Stella dear,—
O Alice, love, soul of my life,
A little while I linger here,
And then I'll meet my child and wife :

A few more days"—"Hold," said the knight,
Forgive me, father, I must know
If I have heard those names aright,
Stella and Alice?" "Even so."

"And did the child a locket wear
Of gold, engraved with queer device,
Within, a curl of sunny hair,
Tied with a golden chain so nice?"

"Say quick, sir knight, where saw you
this?
Oh can it be that this is true!
Ah, if it is, then all my bliss
I owe to you, I owe to you."

Upon that ne'er forgotten day,
My child just such a locket wore.—"
"Now father, calm thyself I pray,
I can thy long lost child restore!

Within my father's castle strong,
Beloved by all, there dwells the maid;
As happy as in days long gone,
When we as little children played.

Too long the story now to tell,
Of how my father chanced that day
To roam alone within that dell,
And found the little child at play ;

How straying on he found your dead,
And you upon the cold earth lying,
Alone, for everyone had fled
And left you there,—the dead and dying.

He tried, but naught of aid could give,
Then took the child in his own arms,
To his own home, with him to live,
Secure from any future harms.

With aid, he came back to the spot
To give whate'er relief he could,
But when, he reached it found you not,
Although he searched through all the
wood.

But come ; we only linger here
And let the passing moments fly,
Which should reveal a daughter dear,
Unto a father's longing eye."

The knight and hermit, side by side,
Now journey o'er a narrow road ;

The knight doth walk, the hermit ride,
And thus they leave his late abode.

On, on they go, nor stop until
The road unto the castle brought
Them both. Count Rupert wondered
still,
The hermit seemed so deep in thought.

A single blast upon his horn
The knight blew loud, and soon the
gate,
By his liege men was open thrown
To welcome him, with joy elate.

They thought him lost, had scoured the
wood,
Had searched all places—everywhere;
Looked for his body in the flood,
Till all at last 'gan to despair:

They say his father's wild with grief;
His Stella, his affianced bride,
Had hoped 'gainst hope beyond belief,
Though seeking not her fears to hide.

By this, they reach the portals strong,
At his approach they open fly,

And straight, into his arms there sprung
A maiden, with a joyful cry ;

“ O Rupert ! once again restored,
No more from Stella thou shalt flee ;
Soul of my soul, my own adored,
What had I been, if robbed of thee ! ”

“ Nay, weep not, sweet, nor let these
tears
Rebellious flow and stain thy cheek ;
Nay, calm these fond and foolish fears,
To leave thee ne’er again I’ll seek.

But see ! instead of robbing me
From thee, kind fate hath brought another
Who smiled upon thy infancy,
Behold, my sweet, behold—thy father ! ”

“ My father ? ” “ Yes, I see thee, child,
Come to my arms, one close embrace ;—
I thank thee, God, to one defiled
Like I, thou’st given such heavenly grace.

All praise be to God ! my penance is
done,—
The bright gates of heaven are opened at
last ;

And now from this earth to the realms
of the sun,
My soul in a transport of glory has
passed.

Though dark was the morning, and darker
the day,
My evening of life, amid glories shall
end ;
And God's brow, of brilliancy casts such
a ray,
The shadow of Death melts away as they
blend.

No more o'er this bleak, barren earth
shall I wander,
Nor ever be troubled with sorrows nor
sins ;
I go to my Father,—on earth there's
none fonder ;
I go where pain ends, and where pleasure
begins.

Oh Alice, my darling ! I'm coming to
greet you,
And bring our child with me to gladden
your heart,—

Our Stella I'm bringing, she's coming to
meet you,
Where those who have met there may
nevermore part.

Bright angels are round me, their wings
are uplifting
My purified soul from its casement of
clay;
The clouds from the pathway to heaven
are drifting,—
And now,—we are coming,—we're away,
—we're away."

He sank into Count Rupert's arms,—
He laid him gently on the bed,
And closed his eyes;—from earth's alarms
The gentle hermit's soul had fled!

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

CUPID'S ARMS.

O fair is the race of my beauteous one,
And spotless her soul as the new fallen
 snow ;
While her heart, like the snow, 'neath the
 warmth of the sun,
Dissolves into tear-drops for others in
 woe.

In the soft liquid depths of her dark
 beaming eyes,
That sparkle and glisten like crystals of
 dew
At morn, when Sol first appears in the
 skies,
Revealing the beauties of nature to
 view,—

Are hidden the quivers of Love's cruel
 darts,
That flash to their aim, and true to their
 mark,
Where they rankle and burn in the core
 of our hearts,
And burst into flame, like the tinder and
 spark.

Young Cupid himself, took her lips for
 his bow,
And strung them with teeth like a neck-
 lace of pearls ;
The glance of her eyes used for arrows—
 and so
He was armed *cap-a-pie*, fit to conquer
 whole worlds!

A VISION;
OR,
THE OLD ACADEMY.

And Recollection brings to view the days of long ago.

'Tis night, and still. O'er Luna's modest
face,
A passing cloud has cast a silv'ry veil,
As 'lone I stand before this hallowed
place,
Sunk deep in thought. Stay, what's this
I trace?
A rising mass—all indistinct and pale;
Higher it rises—plainer to my view—
'Takes shape and form—ah, now revealed
I see
What my prophetic soul divined so true,
And hails with joy,—thou old Academy!

Yes, as of old; the fountain and the
trees
That laughed and sported with each pass-
ing breeze;
Thy high square columns, double porches,
ells,—
All these entrance me with their potent
spells;
Thy dun gray walls that many a storm
had felt,
And lo, the spirits that within them once
had dwelt!

See how yon casement glows with ghost-
ly light!
Look, see that figure clothed in spotless
white!
And now it close, and closer to the win-
dow nears,
With hands outstretched,—as though it
would entreat;
Its lips more softly, but unto my ears
No sound is wafted.—Suddenly, complete,
All vanishes away and disappears,
As some rude clown comes whistling
down the street.

* * * * *

The phantom building, white-robed figure, light,—
All, all are gone, and Luna's shining bright!

THE ART OF KISSING.

With her head upon your shoulder,
And your arm around her waist;—
With your hands fast clasped together,
Gazing tenderly in her face,—

'Tis a moment of such rapture
As but seldom comes in life,
When soul looks into soul again,
Forgetting pain and strife.

And the trem'lous lips an instant,
Move in efforts vain to speak
Of the wild, yet sweet emotion
That crimsons brow and cheek.

And then—no longer pausing—
In warm ecstatic bliss,
Earth, heaven and all's forgotten,
In a fond and clinging kiss.

* * * * *

In after life, when tempest tossed,
Your barque is fiercely driven
Upon the reefs of dark despair,
Then like a star in heaven,

That kiss will shine resplendently
Upon the troubled wave,
And point the harbor distantly,
That may your vessel save.

O joy of joys ! most heavenly
A woman's kiss doth prove,
But though her kiss' celestial,
Elysian is her love !

A CHANGE.

A change from the old to the new,
A change from the past to the present ;
With far different objects in view,
Than ever before—and more pleasant.

The mists of the night are dispersed,
'Neath the bright warming glow of the
 sun ;
And the dark baleful vapors that cursed
My existence, are gone one by one.

My storm-beaten barque on the foam
Of Life's rough tempestuous main,
Now safely rides anchored at home,
Ne'er to risk the fierce maelstrom again.

O'er valley and mountain, the beams
Of Luna, the pale queen of night,
In mellowêd radiance gleams,
Revealing Contentment to sight:

Her sweet calming influence steals
O'er my soul, 'till at last its at rest;
And my innermost being now feels,
That all has turned out for the best.

Then hail to the swift coming Light!
Farewell, to the valley of Gloom:
The day god advancing so bright,
Sends the ghosts of the Past to the
tomb.

A change from the Night to the Day,
A change from the Darkness to Light;
The past is all blotted away,
And the Future's an Eden to sight!

TO ———

Like these withered, faded blossoms,
So from life, has brightness fled ;
Like them, in this lonely bosom
Hope and happiness lie dead.

Yet if thou shouldst smile on either,—
Speak one word—thy quick'ning breath
Would the flowers bloom restore them—
Bring back hope and joy from death.

See ! as now thou smilest on them,
Bud and blossom laugh and blush ;
Blush and laugh, as tho' they'd tell thee—
Nay, ye tell-tale roses, hush.

ANACREONTIC.

Mars, desp'rate, and angry with Venus
 one day,
Sought Cupid, and when he had found
 him,
He seized on the boy in an insolent way,
And with locks and with fetters he bound
 him.

The poor infant cried and entreated in
 vain,
The stern god of war was obdurate ;
When he left, Cupid broke all his fetters
 in twain.
And laughed,—for he knew he could do
 it.

At length Mars returned and no captive
 found,
Then raging, he stormed in his wrath,
But soon became quiet, for fast he was
 bound
In the nets Love had cast in his path.

“ Ah, ha ! ” cried the boy, coming boldly
in view,

“ Love ne’er can be bound in your fetters ;
That much you should know, if you only
but knew

The first A B C of Love’s letters.”

And now my lord, you’re in Love’s
nets,—

Love’s, who never, ne’er forgets !

TO MY MOTHER,

WHO SENT THE AUTHOR A BOUQUET LATE IN AUTUMN.

Though Winter's chilling frosts are near,
When all the flowers must die,
And leave the landscape dark and drear,
Beneath a sullen sky,—

E'er yet that sad'ning time has come,
You've plucked these dainty flowers,
And sent to glad my heart like some
Fair elf from fairie bowers.

A message too, they bring to me,
And whisper in my ear,
"Thy mother ever thinks of thee,
To *her*, thou still art dear."

"Though lonely thou, without one friend,
Care not for smiles of others,
Let joy and sweet contentment blend,
No friendship's like thy mother's."

Yes mother, blessed be thy name,
One tie's to me *yet* bound;
And if my footsteps lead to fame,
Through thee it will be found.

A NIGHT TEMPEST.

Down falls the rain! The earth with
dew is drenched,
Distilled in torrents from the vaults of
heaven.
The dazzling lightning pierces through
the clouds,
That loudly roar with anger or in pain.
Strong Boreas shrieks in ecstasy of
mirth,
And twists the tall oaks till they snap in
twain,—
Then hurrying onward, seeking for
more prey,
He dashes on the strong and solid walls
Of firm built dwellings, that resist his
might,
Till in his baffled fury, fierce with rage,
He howls and yells like horrid demon
mad;
When gathering all his forces for th'
assault,

He hurls them on the object of his
spleen
With such strong effort, and such match-
less might,
That groaning, to the earth it crumbling
falls.
Against the solid rock, Jove hurls his
dart
While smoking from the fiery furnace
still,
And rends the close wrought granite
into dust,
While starting all the castle into flames,
That seek to rival their Promethean
source,
The horrors of the fearful night are
seen
In all their grandeur and majestic power.

* * * * *

Morn breaks ; and yon arising in the
east,
Aurora, goddess of the dawn appears ;
And Sol, in chariot drawn by fiery
steeds,
Dispels the mists and terrors of the
night.

LINES.

As fresh as Aurora she rises at morning,
When nature's perfumed with the clear
tears of night,
Which Sol quickly dries, while the young
day adorning
In garments of beauty, of joy, and of
light.

And bright as the goddess of dawn is
the vision,
Which often I see as I pass by her
bower;
To gaze on her fills me with feelings
elysian,
Enraptures my soul with the bliss of the
hour.

Her close clinging garment, instead of
concealing
The soft rounded figure of beautiful mold,
Perfection of symmetry aids in revealing,
As lovingly doth it her fair form enfold.

Those dark glist'ning tresses, their soft
 waves entwining
O'er head that is shapely and set like a
 queen's ;—
Her neck's pearly whiteness, cold marble
 outshining,
While the low flowing dress. the warm
 bosom just screens.

O beautiful eyes ! how electric the light-
 ning
That darts from its cover of long silken
 lash ;
A glance and a smile, thrill throughout
 me, while brightning,
A glimpse into Heaven 's revealed by the
 flash !

That mouth I'd describe, but I only
 would miss it
If I should attempt to, poor words are
 too cold ;
So I only will say, that he who might
 kiss it,
His "reason" would *lose, gain* "a feast of
 the soul."

The rose on her cheek, is much fairer
than ever
Hath blossomed 'neath florist's assidu-
ous care;
May nothing e'er cause it to fade or to
wither,
But always to bloom as at present's my
prayer.

* * * * *

Bright beacon of joy! though to thee
I'm a stranger,
And may always, forever to thee be un-
known,
My muse is an index of self,—naught
can change her,
We'll cherish thy mem'ry long after
thou'rt flown.

TO ———

Though dazzling is thy dark, bright eye,
Yet with'ring is its scorching fire,—
As lightnings that from heaven fly,
We fear them when we most admire.

Yet if a pitying tear should steal
To dim thine eyes' too brilliant beams,—
To prove thy tender heart can feel,
Compassionate, the Poet's dreams,—

Then in his dreams—though years had
 flown,
And wide life's pathways lay apart—
He'll see thine eyes as then they shone,
The tear, enshrine within his heart!

STAR OF BETHLEHEM.

EXTRACT FROM "THE NASHVILLE AMERICAN."

To the Editor of The American:

I read in to-day's *American* an article which placed the star of Bethlehem in an altogether conjectural light, either scientific or miraculous.

The latter opinion, I think, is accepted without hesitation by all Christians the world over.

That star was but the flame that guided the "wise men" to the place where the Child lay, enwrapped in an unquenchable blaze of glory, whose glorious effulgence, emanating from himself, should rise higher and higher, until, like a blazing castle at night, valley and hill, meadow and stream, from darkest cave to loftiest mountain top,—the entire universe should be lighted by the splendor and power of his name as long as time endures.

The enclosed lines will, I think, voice the sentiment of the general public, in their views regarding

THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM.

High glittering in the bright ethereal
dome [ling lights
Of heaven, 'mongst the myriad spark-

That 'luminate the trackless sea of space,
Like diamonds gleaming o'er the robe
of night,
Once shone a star.

Resplendent in its glory o'er the rest,
As midday's sun compared to the pale
moon,
When hanging like a crescent in the sky,
She only shows the darkness of the
night
By her soft light.

Low lying in a manger, 'mongst the
beasts,
The royal Son of God, an infant lay;
That burning star,—like beacon through
the mist—
Moved tow'rds him, leading wise men
from the East
To where he slept.

There pausing, like a jewel in a crown,
It hung above and showed the King
below;

In countless numbers, swarmed an angel
throng
On fiery wings, their choral voices
raised
In praise of Him.

The humble shepherds wakened by the
sound,
Uprose, and gazed in terror and amaze
At that strange sight, then on tow'rds
Bethlehem
They haste their way, and as they go
they tell
Their wondrous tale.

And when the city they had entered in,
Faint rumors reached their ears of
what they long
Had been foretold—a Saviour born to
men!
They searched, and found the virgin
and the Child,
And worshipped Him.

Loud ringing in the air, was heard the
 sound
 Of joyful angels singing to th' Adored,
"Glory to God in the highest, on earth
 peace,
 Good will tow'rd men;" and thus awoke
 the first
 Glad Christmas morn.

Near nineteen hundred years have passed
 since then,
 And yet, to-day, as brightly as of old,
That star doth shine within the minds
 of men,
 And all its glowing warmth doth still
 enfold
Them with a rapture that can ne'er grow
 cold—
 Tongue may not speak it, neither
 hand may pen.

LINES.

It seems as if but yesterday,
That thou wert by my side,
And all the world was fair and gay,
My dear beloved bride ;
But cruel death claimed thee his prey,
And took thee from this earth away,—
Oh, could I then have died !

Thy life was in its youth and bloom,
The bud was just full blown,
And like the rose's soft perfume,
Its sweets o'er all were thrown ;
Thy presence always banished gloom,
And now thou'rt in the silent tomb,
My loved, my lost, my *own*.

Within the tomb and lost ! Ah, no !
Tho' there thy ashes lie,
Thy soul has found its home, I know,
With God who reigns on high ;
And in the future I may go
To join thee, and we'll part no more.—
O were that moment nigh !

ODE ON THE DEATH OF JEFFERSON DAVIS.

A nation is whelmed beneath sorrow and
grief!

A nation is mourning the loss of her
chief.

He peacefully sleeps — life's battle is
o'er,—

Vexation and conflict shall trouble no
more.

When over our Southland the war cloud
had burst,

And cannon were belching forth light-
ning and flame,—

'Twas then he was chosen our Chieftain,
the first,

And the last, that our Southland has
given that name.

“When men's souls were tried,” aye,
tried to the end,

Where the end of their trials was found
in the grave,

Not death's fiercest forms could his spirit
unbend,—

A fear to the coward a joy to the brave!

Forever thy name—both in history and
story—

Jeff Davis, shall live, nor ever can die ;
Resplendently shining 'mid halos of
glory, [the sky.
Among the bright stars it will mount to

Then peacefully sleep, life's battle is o'er,
Vexation and conflict shall trouble no
more.

'TIS FOLLY THUS TO SEEK TO DROWN.

'Tis folly thus to seek to drown
All thoughts of care and pain,—
All sorrow, in the brimming cup
Which we must quaff again.

For still, 'mid anguish we'd avoid,
The pleasures we would gain,—
E'en when the bowl is emptied dry,
Despair, doth still remain.

THE SCAR REMAINS STILL TENDER.

The scar remains still tender, even though
The wound that caused it, healed some
time ago.

THE CITY OF THE DEAD.

A FRAGMENT : WRITTEN IN A CEMETERY AT MIDNIGHT.

Alone amidst the slumbering dead :
The pale moonbeams above my head,
O'er all the Silent City shed
A pale and sickly light.
The white snow lay beneath my feet,
So pure and spotless, it were meet
To be the spirit's winding-sheet,
A weird yet lovely sight !

Around me rose the lofty column,
Towering o'er me, dark and solemn,
Emblem grim of Death :
While 'graved in letters deep and bold,
Name, date of birth and death were told
Upon the marble, hard and cold,
By those who were bereft.

Surmounting stately shaft, there rose
An angel weeping, full of woes,
With head downcast and wings all closed,
Thence ne'er to take its flight :
On others still, the woeful urn,
Placed by the sorrowing hearts that burn
To have the lost once more return,
And glad them with the sight.

THE FAIREST FACE OF ALL.

You may sing of your fairies that dance
in the hollows,

And tell of the mermaids that sing 'neath
the sea;

Apollo may tune his sweet lyre till it
follows,

It melts with the praise of the fair lorelei.

You may tell of the nymphs in the forest
of Arden,

And rave o'er the graces of Helen of Troy;

Of the maids that disported in Babylon's
garden,

And she who gave birth to the love-light-
ing boy.

Your numbers may ring with the soul-
stirring glances

That dart from the eyes of Venetian
ladies;

Or throb till they burst, when they tell
of the lances

Cast forth from *one* eye by the beauties
of Cadiz.

The muse cannot stir me with tales quick,
and thrilling,

BEWARE !

Like the rushing torrent's course,
That seeks its level on the plain,
A man may downward dash till lost,
But never may ascend again ;

Unless with patient toil and care,
Kind hearts should woo him back once
 more
Unto the heights, the place from where
The World's esteem he held of yore.

But, oh ! if all from him should turn,
And say " much better I than he,"—
His promise of reforming spurn,
And mock him in his misery ;—

Then what is left for him to do,
No hope on earth, no faith in heaven ?
He can but Man's injustice rue,
By whom no hope of aught is given.

Beware, beware, before you say
One word to break a sinking heart,
For it may be your lot some day,
With him to change and take his part.

To be cast down as low as he,
Without one sympathetic friend
To mark thy great calamity,
Nor care how soon may be thy end !

A DREAM.

A kiss, a dream ; but o'er my darkened
soul,
Transcendent in its purity from heaven,
There fell a flood of light, fresh, warm
and glowing.
It searched the inmost recess of my
heart,
And brought to light what e'er was good
therein,—
Which like the diamond hidden in the
mine,
Its fires smothered 'neath the sodden
clay,
None knows that there a priceless treasure
lies ;
But when exposed unto the living light,
It sparkles with a lustre not its own,
But pure itself, it but reflects the beams
Of that bright sun that makes it what it
seems.

And so, whate'er of good is left in me,
Was brought unto the surface by that
touch
Of thy soft lips upon my sullied cheek,
Sunken and wan, by my past wild career.
That fresh, sweet contact, like electric
coils,
That when together placed doth swift
produce
The vivid lightning flash, that penetrates
Into those places most obscure, remote,—
So flashed thy spirit o'er this soul of mine,
To give it life and hope and strength to
live.
A kiss, a dream; the bless it brought to
me,
Doth thrill me yet when e'er I think of
thee!

O IF I COULD BUT KISS THOSE LIPS.

O if I could but kiss those lips!—
Now sweet—good-night—God bless you!

THE SUICIDE.

With face upturned, the suicide lay,
His lips were ashen and cold;
He had taken his life in a desperate way,
To seek the grave, where never a ray
Of the sun's bright beams could evermore
 stray,
Or its glorious light unfold.

Did he long life's mystery to unseal,
That he sought Death's gloomy shore?
Thought he oblivion would reveal
A balm that his spirit still might heal
Of all the pangs that his soul could
 feel,—
Be troubled nevermore?

It may be, that his mind was racked
With torture beyond control;
It may be, that he sought what he lacked
On earth, in the grave, but the truth of
 this fact
Will certainly never be told.

'Twas whispered, by some transaction
done,
(If right the story I trace,)
The chance of a felon's cell he'd run,
And the thought of such end his brain
did stun,
Till he felt deserted by everyone,
And died to avoid disgrace.

No friend was near to hold his hand,
Or whisper a word of love :
But alone amid crowds, at his own
command,
He left this world for another land,—
Embarked for the future's distant strand,
Let us hope he's at peace,—above.

ENOUGH HE KNEW.

Enough he knew, to ne'er know peace
again,
While aught that he knew not, should
yet remain.

THE CHURCH ORGAN.

Written on hearing some very fine music at the Episcopal Church at Clarksville, Tenn.

Through the deep-toned organ's voice,
Hear the words of God outspoken :
Bidding mankind to rejoice,
And from their lethargy awaken.

Listen to the heav'nly strains !
To the throne of Grace ascending ;
Where the Lord in glory reigns,
With a splendor never ending.

Tender melody, divine !
Tremulous, so soft and low,
Which the muses unconfine
To fill us with a holy glow.

Then again ; with rapt'rous swell,
Harmonious still, the notes resound ;
As though they would to all men tell
Of joys beyond the grave profound.

And now, as if an angel choir,
Were singing praises at the throne ;—
Or like the soft Æolian lyre,
That makes sweet music all alone—

The organ speaks in tones so low,
Like summer zephyrs, gently sighing,
That stop a moment as they go,
Then onward softly flying, dying.

* * * * *

A peaceful calm steals o'er our mind ;
A calm that gives the spirit rest,
And one brief moment, we may find
The joy that fills a sinless breast.

TO STELLA.

Thou shinest o'er my path, and thy bright
 rays
Dispels the gloom that gathers there so
 black,
That midnight darkness, when compared
 thereto,
Doth seem like noontide brightness.
 O'er my life,
Like to a meteor darting through the
 heavens,
That momentarily lights the earth be-
 neath,
Revealing things that hitherto had been
Hid from the sight of man—so did thy
 beams
Show unto me, that which might once
 have been.

TO ———

May the perfume of these flowers,
O'er thy couch their fragrance throwing,
Help relieve the tedious hours,
Swiftly haste their onward going,

Till bright rosy Health appearing,
Puts the spectre Pain to flight ;
While her gladsome train close nearing,
Shows but hopes and pleasures bright.

And when thou art well and merry,
This will all seem but a dream,
From which thou hast wakened, cheery,
Bright and gay, with morn's first beam.

As when clouds, chaste Dian's glances,
Envious, seek to hide and chain,
This her beauty but enhances,
When she doth appear again ;—

So thou too, when illness fleeing
From the face of strength returned,
Then wilt feel through all thy being,
Fairer joys than e'er discerned.

Then the sun will shine more brightly,
Then the birds will sweeter sing ;
Then thy heart will beat more lightly,
And thy voice more blithesome ring.

Then—But stay, ye babbling muses,
Too audacious you have been ;
She perhaps e'en now abuses
You, and my obtrusive pen.

Still my muses, (softly whisper)
Tell her that we're not to blame,
That we but return (so lisp her)
Inspiration whence it came.

THEY SEEK TO READ THE MYSTERIES.

They seek to read the mysteries of the
stars,
Who cannot spell the smallest words of
nature.

TO ———

Oh, lady, could it be my fate,
From those dark liquid eyes of thine,
To catch the beams that scintillate
As bright as stars in heaven shine,—
I'd turn to them from Eden's gate;
No other heaven I'd ask as mine,
Save but to worship at thy shrine!

"A SPANISH CAVALIER."

As I pensive walked, and lonely,
Dreaming dreams none e'er may know,
Like a murmur in the gloaming,
Rose a song of long ago.

Clearly through the gath'ring twilight—
Softly on the evening air,
Rang the words of some old ballad,
Sung by merry maidens fair.

And I paused awhile to listen,
As their voices rose and fell;
Paused to listen, what the lover
Would unto the lady tell.

Borne upon the wings of zephyrs,
Came the vow, "I will be true;"
Sank unto a sigh, a whisper,
And I faintly heard, "To you."

Then, like sweetest seraphs singing,
"Sunny days will fade away;"
And the heavenly music ringing
In my ears, then seemed to say:

“ Forever remember, and ever be true,
Tho’ time swiftly flies, and the present
doth vanish ;
Yet still recollection presents to the view
Fond dreams of the past, every sorrow
to banish.

“ Bright moments of happiness, shrined
in your heart,
Will ripen to hours of pleasure hereafter ;
When pain and distress, cause the fond
tears to start,
Gaze into that shrine, and t’will change
them to laughter.”

* * * * *

The song was ended, and the last low
notes
Of the guitar, died tremblingly away ;
But round me still, the soft refrain yet
floats,
And seems to sigh, “ Remember what I
say.”

TO A VIOLET.

Modest little violet!
Peeping through the wintry storm,
Pure and innocent but yet,
Firm and beautiful thy form.—
Like the Christian, through the shadows,
Bold emerging from the gloom
Of earth, to walk the heavenly meadows,
When arisen from the tomb.

“THE PEN IS MIGHTIER THAN THE
SWORD.”

“The pen is mightier than the sword,”
Guided by Woman’s hand, as swift it
 moves,
Scattering gems of thought, that smile
 and glisten
Like dewdrops on the blushing rose at
 morn !

OUR BABY.

Little sunbeam !
Laughing sprite !
Like a day-dream
Sweet and bright ;
Gaily singing,
While the ringing
Of her voice, its passage winging
To our hearts,—fills with delight
Our souls, to see the gladsome sight.

Through her hair,—
So soft and fair,
Everywhere,
The gentle air
Of zephyrs playing,
Onward straying,
Only for a moment staying,—
Soft caresses
Golden tresses,
And our little angel blesses.

From her eyes,
Like lightning flies
Darting glances,
Which enhances
All the beauty of her face ;
While she tries
To look quite wise,
The merry twinkle of her eyes,
All her sober look denies,
And the mirth within we trace.

May all your life
Be free from strife ;
Always light,
And never night.
But still, if sorrow come to you,
Then with it come the heav'nly dew,
Which God above doth keep in store,
Upon the wounded heart to pour.

TO —

Oh, why just before the sad moment of
parting,
Did you wish to break friendship's affectionate spell?
When pride only held back the tear that
was starting,
Which would have betrayed what the
tongue could not tell.

You listened, and heard all that others
had spoken
To tarnish and sully my name in your
sight;
You heeded their words, and the sweet
chain was broken,
And scattered its links—nevermore to
unite.

RESISTANCE DOTH BECOME SO DULL
AND STUPID.

Resistance doth become so dull and
stupid,
When 'saulted by that little demon,
Cupid!

THE VIOLET AND SUNBEAM.

A violet opened her velvety eyes,
And gazed on a sunbeam with joy and
surprise !
She had been fast asleep, in a cool, quiet
nook,
Her cover, night's mantle, her couch,
the soft moss ;
And to soothe her to slumber, a musical
brook
With his murmuring minstrelsy, was at
no loss.

The sunbeam—a gay, dashing fellow—
had strayed
In chase of a shadow, but now in the
glade
It was lost. And while he was searching
in vain
To find it, by chance his inquisitive eyes
Glanced over the spot where the violet
had lain
All the night, and awoke her to joy and
surprise.

The violet coquettishly nodded her head,
He beamingly smiled, but ne'er a word
 said;
The brook softly laughed, and upward
 he threw
A shower of crystals; the gay zephyrs
 caught them,
And swift on their light, airy pinions
 they flew,
And soon to the sweet modest violet
 brought them

And scattered them all in her face! then
 fled
As they gaily whispered, "You'll wed,
 you'll wed!"
The color came into the violet's face,
As the sunbeam yet nearer and nearer
 advances,
Till at length she's enclosed in his ardent
 embrace,
And quivers and burns, 'neath his fiery
 glances.

Ah! woe am I! for this true loving
 pair—
The sunbeam bright, and the violet fair!

She withered and died with his burning
kiss;

He faded away and his brightness fled,
For he knew that the ending of all his
bliss, [bed.

With his love lay there on her mossy

A dark, cruel cloud that was passing by,
With a lance of flame and a roaring cry,
Then bore down upon him and quenched
his life.

The wild wind wails and their story
tells—

The dark cloud weeps and repents the
strife; [knells.

While the bluebell rings their untimely

The brook a low mournful dirge now
sings,

And heavy with sighs, the sad zephyr
wings

His sorrowful flight to some radiant
star-land, [grow

Where strange, sweet, wonderful flowers
With his lightest breath, to so bright
a garland,

It rivals the ones that in Paradise blow.

THE POSTAL CARD.

Oh, acting and writing 's a strange
contradiction,
As late by experience shown ;
For actions are facts, and letters are
fiction,—
At least, such of late are your own.

You told me that you would take pleasure
in writing,
And naught should your letters retard ;
Dear girl, does it take a whole week for
inditing
Just one little brief postal card ?

TO PHYLLIS.

Thou lovest me ! Renounce the thought !
Ah, sooner might to earth, by far,
From its high realms of light be brought,
Yon glittering and radiant star—

Than thou to link thy fate with mine,
So dark, so cheerless and forlorn,
That 't would but crush that heart of
 thine,
And cloud thy life's bright, happy morn.

TO THE SAME.

Black-eyed Phyllis ! why should she
Dream, or have one thought of me ?
Though my love for her is true,
All the world doth love her too,—
Love from *all* 's to Phyllis due !

THE OPERA "PATIENCE."

This poem was written upon witnessing the charming little opera of "Patience," as played by home dramatic talent, of Clarksville, Tenn. To understand the following verses, one should be familiar with the above-mentioned opera.

INVOCATION.

Awake my muse ! and plume thy wing
For flights beyond thy wonted sphere ;
Of Clarksville's youth and beauty sing,
But oh ! thou art too weak, I fear,

To render justice to the theme
Which I in verses fain would tell ;
But still, arise, proclaim thy dream,
And let the rapt'rous numbers swell !

If I should fail to soar 'mid clouds,
With famous bards of high renown,
Oblivion *still* provides the shrouds
Aspiring rhymers oft have found.

Your attention pray give, if you please,
every one,
For now is the opera of "Patience" begun,
With notes on the flute, the talented
Wright*
The hearts of the audience will fill with
delight;
While 'midst the changes and throughout
the play, [forte;
Sweet music's discoursed on the piano-
And clearly above the harmonious din,
Are heard the pure tones of the sweet
violin.

The scenes are all shifted, the curtain is
lifted,
And now will be heard the sweet songs
of the gifted
Young singers and players, who soon
will appear
On the stage, to the audience assembled
to hear
Their rendition of "Patience,"—that
popular play,
'Mongst people of Clarksville, the talk
of the day.

* A well known M. D. of Clarksville, who is well versed in music, and who plays the flute with no small degree of skill.

Oh see ! the bright vision that now greets
our eyes,
Makes us think for a moment we're in
Paradise !
Are they syrens, or angels, or spirits of
air ?
Or only Earth's maidens enchantingly
fair,
Resembling the houris that dwell in the
skies,
Or heaven's fall'n angels, lovely peris,
Who gladden this world till their penance
is done,
And then wing their flight to the realms
of the sun.

Charming fairies, lightly dancing,
Bright eyes swiftly at us glancing,
With their smiles our souls entrancing !

But who is it comes now amongst them
arrayed
In costume proclaiming the gentle milk-
maid ?
'Tis Patience ! 'tis Patience ! the queen
of the play—
Bright star 'midst the stars of this bright
milky way

Of beautiful maidens, more lovely by far
Then Venus herself, or her namesake
the star
That alternately reigneth at morn and at
even,
O'er all the bright spheres that are spark-
ling in heaven!

Alas! but naught of love knows she,
(As her song doth tell),
And Cupid, Love's divinity,
The god of love, not even he
Within her heart may dwell!

And now boldly marching, the heavy
dragoons,—
Who ne'er saw a battle and naught know
of wounds,—
To the scene of their triumphs in Love's
court returned,
By their sweethearts of yore are now
scornfully spurned.
For the gay military, they no longer care,
But prefer the dark man with short pants,
and long hair,
Bunthorne, by name, an æsthetic sham,
Whom they garland with roses and lead
like a lamb

To the altar—no, no, I mean to be raffled,
When Patience appears:—Tableaux,
they're baffled,
For instantly doth she the matter decide,
By promising Bunthorne, that *she'll* be
his bride.

Alas for poor Patience! the sweet little
beauty—
She loves not in truth, but loves as a
duty!
He who first won her baby affection,
And above all men *now* would be her
selection,
Is debarred of the prize by his very per-
fection!
Than Narcissus, Adonis, more beautiful
far,—
Oh, fatal the beauty, and evil the star
Under which he was born, alas, poor
Grosvenor!

The first act is over, the curtain is
dropped, [stopped,
The deaf'ning applause for a moment is
And presently now, there comes into
view [the dew
A maiden more fair than the rose with

Of the morning upon it,* and bursts
 into song,
Which ending, the rapt'rous applause
 loud and long,
Continues, and eagerly calls for *encore*,
Till at length the sweet songstress
 appears as before.

And now a rich melody from her lips trills
In silvery tones that awaken the thrills
Of exquisite pleasure,
With every sweet measure,—
Like the streamlet's gentle rill,
Swiftly gliding down the hill,
Flashing, splashing, onward dashing,
Our cup of happiness to fill !

O WOMAN IS THE CURSE OF MAN.

O woman is the curse of man,
As also she's the blessing ;
Could e'en the god of war withstand
Sweet Venus' caressing ?

* A young lady who has since studied, and developed a naturally charming voice to a high degree of excellence. She is at present a rising star on the operatic horizon.

No, no, her smiles and blandishments
Doth make the wisest fools ;
And naught there is, her soul contents,
Like seeing slaves she rules.

Her smile can give the greatest joy,
Her frown the greatest sorrow ;
But from Life's worries the alloy,
From her alone we borrow.

THOUGH DAZZLING IS THE BRIGHT
BLACK EYE.

Though dazzling is the bright black
eye,
Yet withering is its scorching fire ;
As lightnings that from heaven fly,
We fear them when we would admire.
Not so the ones of melting blue,
So soft, so pure their azure hue,
They charm us as we nearer move,
And when we meet them, then we love !

THE BANQUET.

The banquet hall with youths was filled,
And bright the lights were shining there,
The while they sought slow time to kill,
And banish from their hearts dull care.

“ A toast ! a toast ! ” they cry amain,
“ Come Reginald, give us a toast ;
Let not our pleading be in vain,
Remember that thou art our host.”

And then arose a youth whose brow
The stamp of noble manhood bore,
And thus commenced (with courteous
bow,)
A toast they ne’er had heard before.

THE GRAPE.

Hail ! most luscious fruit of earth,
And list while I thy praises sing ;
Tho’ others there may be of worth,
Yet o’er them all, thou art the king !

The clusters that adorn thy vine,
With sweetest nectar over-flowing,
When pressed, yield up the sparkling
 wine,
In richest ruby colors glowing.

Then merrily fill up the bowl,
And in this wine the Grape we'll pledge ;
For it doth warm our inmost soul,
And to our words, gives wit and edge.

O russet Grape and ruby Wine,
The body one the soul the other,
The Soul is fit for gods divine ;
*For man, the Body altogether.**

But still, we'd quaff this heav'nly drink
Which Hebe to the Thunderer carried,
E'en tho' it brought us to the brink
Of the river Styx, soon to be ferried

Across its dark and dismal wave,
Unto the land of Far Beyond ;
Whose shore its murky waters lave,
And where from thence there's no return.

* The grape (body) in its natural form nourishes, but does not harm mankind. But the soul, the essence, in short, the wine steals away his senses and is therefore only fit for the gods—who have none.

Ha, ha, away with thoughts like these !
In joyousness we'll pass the hours ;
The while reclining at our ease
Within the vineyard's trellised bowers,

We'll think of hope, and love, and bliss,
While life's bright sun is still on high ;
And when the goblet's lip we kiss,
With wine we'll drown the rising sigh.

But hark! What voice is that I hear
That solemn falls upon my ear ?

“ Wine is a mocker, strong drink is
raging ;
Who hath sorrow ? Who hath woe ?
He who tarrieth at the wine cup, —waging
His soul for pleasures here below.”

On with the revel ! and quickly fill
Each goblet till it holds no more,
And soon its warming glow will kill
That voice so often heard before ;

Nor shall it here again intrude,
To cast on us its blighting gloom,
With words repulsive, harsh and rude,
That rob life of its youth and bloom.

Great Bacchus ! we will sing to thee,
And wreath thy brow with grape leaves
 green ;
And while we dance in merry glee,
We'll drive away dull care I ween.

But stay, that voice I hear once more,
In deep toned accents as before !

“ Oh youth, *that* fatal cup forbear,
Tis full of misery for thee !
Although it lightens *now* thy care,
It later on will heavier be ;

The rapture which it lends thee now,
Upon the morrow will be vanished ;
And manhood's stamp upon thy brow,
The demon wine will soon have banished.

Remember, too, that it can never
From out thy heart drive vain regret ;
When all is hushed, the revel over,
Still *Conscience'* voice remaineth yet !

Oh youth ! forswear the wine cup then,
And pledge thee to the temperance
 cause ;

To be a shining light 'mongst men
Obeying God's most holy laws."

* * * * *

The banquet hall's deserted now ;
The youths, O where are they ?
Some there were, who took the vow,
And never more did stray,—

But others, too far gone to save,
Disdained to turn aside ;
So now they fill a drunkard's grave,
Unmourned, unwept, they died!

FAREWELL, TO THE DAYS.

Farewell, to the days that once flitted
so sweetly,
And quickly away to be joined to the
Past :
Alas ! from my life they have vanished
completely,
And those that were brightest, were those
that were last.

Though few was their number, I ne'er
shall forget them,
But often recall them in memory's
dream ;
And I wake with a sigh, when I think
how I let them
Swift vanish away, like the sun's dying
beam.

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